

Explosive entrances

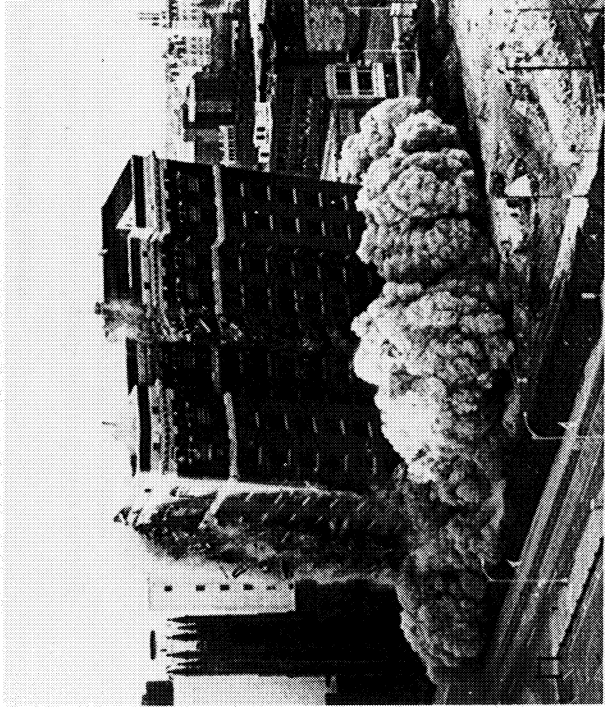
When firemen need to get into a burning building, or chop a hole to provide ventilation, axes can be devastatingly slow. Explosive Technology Inc. manufactures a linear explosive charge based on its device first developed to separate stages of the Gemini launch vehicle.

Small amounts of explosives—10 or 15 grains per foot—make possible highly controlled explosions for spacecraft as well as emergency activities.

Using the shaped charges, called “Jetaxe,” firefighters can cut a 2- x 3-ft ventilation hole or create a three-sided opening in a steel door. Another application is cutting emergency holes in airplanes and trains through which surviving passengers can escape after a crash.

The company also makes a 7,000-grain-per-ft explosive called “Jetcord” for controlled demolition of unsafe buildings or bridges. In contrast to other explosives, Jetcord does not demolish a structure, but cuts it precisely. The detonation cuts through thick steel girders or other materials more cleanly than can be achieved with torches or saws.

Jetcord won an IR 100 award as one of the 100 most significant new products of 1973.



Controlled explosives developed to separate manned upper stages of space rockets in case of mishap have been adapted to cutting emergency exits and demolishing unsafe buildings and bridges. In this series of photographs, Controlled Demolition Inc. employs the versatile explosives—which cut instead of simply blast—to take down the American Industrial Bldg. in Hartford, Conn. The “Jetcord” explosive cuts steel girders as precisely as saws or torches.

